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Alert for All Private Well Owners in Flooded Areas



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DeFuniak Springs, FL - The Florida Department of Health in Walton County (DOH-Walton) advises residents living in homes with private wells affected by flood waters to take precautions against disease-causing organisms that may make their water unsafe to drink.

DOH-Walton recommends ONE of the following:

1. Boil tap water and hold it at a rolling boil for at least one minute. Let it cool before using it for drinking, brushing teeth, washing food, cooking or washing dishes.
2. Disinfect tap water by adding eight drops of plain, unscented household bleach (four to six percent strength), which is about one eighth teaspoon or a dime sized puddle, per gallon of water. If a higher strength bleach is used (8.25% strength), only add seven drops of bleach. Mix the solution and let it stand for 30 minutes. If the water is cloudy after 30 minutes, repeat the procedure one time.

Note: Use a container that has a cap or cover for disinfecting and storing water for drinking. This will prevent contamination. In addition, containers for water should be rinsed with a bleach solution of one tablespoon bleach per gallon of water before reusing them.

3. Use commercially-available bottled water, especially for mixing baby formula.

After the flooding subsides:

- Disinfect your private well using the procedures available from DOH-Walton or visit the Florida Department of Health website: [FloridaHealth.gov/environmental-health/private-well-testing/index.html](https://www.floridahealth.gov/environmental-health/private-well-testing/index.html). You may also visit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (US EPA) website for instructions: [water.epa.gov/drink/info/well/whatdo.cfm](https://www.water.epa.gov/drink/info/well/whatdo.cfm).
- To find out if your water is safe, have it tested by a certified laboratory for coliform bacteria. To find a certified laboratory, visit the following website: fideploc.dep.state.fl.us/aams/index.asp.

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